

DEEPENING THE PORT OF SAVANNAH

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, today, when the House passes the Water Resources Reform and Development Act, included in it will be the largest infrastructure project in the history of Georgia. Deepening the Savannah River from 42 to 47 feet will open up our port to lots of different countries and lots of different kinds of vessels from all over the world. 352,000 jobs are related to the Port of Savannah. The cost-benefit ratio is a dollar spent, five-and-a-half dollar return.

It has been studied by four different Federal agencies and signed off by four Federal agencies. In fact, there were 64 individual studies on environmental impact, historic impact, traffic impact, and nearly just about everything else under the sun.

It is a project that Georgia companies will greatly benefit from, as will all the Southeast, because 62 percent of what the port does is export goods and services. So it opens up the door to all kinds of new markets.

I have to thank the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on a bipartisan basis for all that they have done and thank Mr. SHUSTER for coming to Savannah three different times to look at this project personally.

We are very excited about this. Let's pass this bill today. Let's get the Senate to pass it. Let's get the House and the Senate moving, and let's get Georgians and the whole Southeast back to work.

PUNISHMENT FOR SEX TRAFFICKERS

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, sex trafficking is a growing problem. According to the Polaris Project, some 27 million people worldwide are victims of sex trafficking, of which 1 million are children. Just last year in Nevada, 107 children were recovered after being victimized by traffickers. And we don't even know how many others wait for our help.

That is why I am pleased to vote today on several bills intended to strengthen the punishments for perpetrators, increase protections for potential victims, and ensure that victims are given the support they need to recover and rebuild their lives.

I am also encouraged that we are coming together to condemn the horrendous kidnapping of the girls in Nigeria, whose only crime was to seek an education.

Sex trafficking is horrific. It must be stopped. It denies the fundamental rights and dignity of its victims. Today, we can take a step in that di-

rection. We can take action to speak for those who have no voice. So I encourage my colleagues to join me with a resounding "aye" on this package of bills.

THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, next week, our Nation will celebrate Memorial Day to remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our Nation. May is also National Military Appreciation Month. We are grateful to those in our military for their service, and we strive to make sure they receive the benefits and the services they were promised and that they have earned.

Unfortunately, the quality of services for veterans does not always match our gratitude. Veterans often face long wait times in scheduling appointments, and a record backlog of cases continues to go unaddressed. Serious allegations of mismanagement are raising many questions.

This is why I am a cosponsor of H.R. 4031, the Department of Veterans Affairs Management Accountability Act, which will be considered tomorrow by the House. This legislation would allow the Secretary of the VA more personnel flexibility, resulting in more accountability.

This Memorial Day and Military Appreciation Month, it is an honor to serve the men and women in uniform who have given us so much.

HARBOR MAINTENANCE

(Ms. HAHN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HAHN. Mr. Speaker, after a lot of hard work and collaborative effort, I am pleased that the Water Resources Reform and Development Act conference committee, which I was honored to serve on, was finally able to come to a fair, bipartisan agreement on the new water bill that will create jobs and keep our ports globally competitive.

As a representative of the Nation's busiest port complex in Los Angeles and Long Beach, and cofounder of our PORTS Caucus here in Congress, I have fought hard from my first day in Congress to increase funding for our Nation's ports by fully utilizing our Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to ensure that money that is collected at our ports goes back to our ports.

They don't call me Ms. Harbor Maintenance Tax for nothing around here. It has been a long journey, but I am thrilled that after countless hearings and meetings with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and with the leadership from Chairman SHUSTER and

Ranking Member RAHALL that our proposals to fully utilize our Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and to allow ports to use these funds for expanded uses is included in this final water bill.

When we pass this bipartisan measure, it is a victory not just for the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, but for all our ports—our ports in Savannah and all those in this Nation. When our ports are strong, Mr. Speaker, our Nation is strong.

SCANDAL AT THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

(Mr. YODER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the chorus drawing attention to the appalling situation with the Department of Veterans Affairs. We have learned of the death of 40 veterans due to drawn-out wait times for medical care at facilities in Arizona. Even more disturbing is the coverup to not allow scrutiny and awareness of these tragedies. This may just be the tip of the iceberg.

These men and women offered their lives defending the freedoms of our Nation, and yet our Nation can't afford them the decency of prompt medical care.

Even with these sad and tragic cases, there are still hundreds of thousands of veterans who are waiting in line for services, medical care, and compensation for disabilities they received while serving our great Nation.

It is time for Congress to take swift action to demand better results and greater accountability. It is time that Congress reform the veterans health care system to allow greater flexibility and more options so that veterans are not stuck waiting for care.

Mr. Speaker, these men and women have earned benefits through their service to our Nation. We must keep our promises, and we must honor these American heroes.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS' PLAN TO RESTORE AMERICAN PROSPERITY

(Mr. GINGREY of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Americans are concerned. They are concerned about their jobs. They are concerned about their health and the economy. Last week, 37 percent of Americans ranked these as the most important issues facing our country.

House Republicans have a plan to replace ObamaCare, to create jobs, to grow the economy, and to help hard-working Americans take home more of their paychecks.

While there are some difficult decisions ahead of us, there are some simple decisions that we can agree upon right now. Americans need the repeal

and replacement of ObamaCare so they really can keep their doctor and their hospital. Americans need a simplified Tax Code, one that is fair to everyone. And Americans need the government to remove unnecessary red tape that is preventing economic growth.

We have a plan that can turn their concern into an America that works, an America they need.

RECOGNIZING M.A.R. POR CUBA'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a pro-democracy civil society organization called M.A.R. Por Cuba, Mothers and Women Against Repression—M.A.R.

For 20 years, this Miami-based group of women has been advocating for freedom in Cuba, and it continues to be a voice for those being repressed under the brutal Castro regime.

The mission of M.A.R. Por Cuba is to help and advance causes like justice, liberty, and fundamental freedoms for the people of Cuba. This civic organization has been vital in educating the public about the reality of the atrocities committed on the island and has given a voice to those who put their lives on the line for a free Cuba.

I thank the organization's president, Sylvia Iriondo, for her endless commitment and dedication to the causes of liberty and free elections in Cuba. I commend the important work of the women of M.A.R. Por Cuba, who remind us that we must not ignore the brutal repression that takes place only 90 miles from our shores.

RESIGNATIONS AS MEMBER OF COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET AND COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignations as a member of the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Foreign Affairs:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, May 20, 2014.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington DC.

MR. SPEAKER: I am writing to resign my membership on the House Committees on the Budget and Foreign Affairs as a result of my appointment to the Financial Services Committee.

I am honored to be chosen to serve on the Committee on Financial Services. I regret, however, that my membership on this Committee precludes me from serving on the Budget and Foreign Affairs Committees at this time. I have enjoyed serving on these committees and look forward to maintaining an active role on the issues under their jurisdiction.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

LUKE MESSER,
Member of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the resignations are accepted.

There was no objection.

ELECTING A MEMBER TO A STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the House Republican Conference, I send to the desk a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 589

Resolved, That following named Member be, and is hereby, elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES: Mr. Messer.

Ms. FOXX. (During the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WATER RESOURCES REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2014

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the conference report to the bill (H.R. 3080) to provide for improvements to the rivers and harbors of the United States, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the conference report.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of May 15, 2014, at page H4065.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the conference report to accompany H.R. 3080.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today we are on the floor passing the Water Resources Reform and Development Act's conference report. I am very proud it is a bipartisan bill. We have worked this out through the Senate, and I think what we have here is a jobs bill, a good

jobs bill that is going to create not just construction jobs, but it is going to keep America competitive by investing in and upgrading our water infrastructure to keep us competitive in the world so that our companies and industries can go out into the world economies, gain market share, and then hire people on the factory floor in America. That is what this bill is all about.

I am proud that it is the most reform-driven water bill in the last 20 years—significant reforms. The name reflects that landmark legislation, Water Resources Reform and Development Act.

We should be proud that this is the most fiscally responsible WRRDA in history. We have deauthorized as much as we authorized in this bill, and there are no earmarks in this bill, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, it does not cede any of Congress' constitutional authority to the executive branch, which is one of the top priorities that I had in this bill, to make sure that Congress keeps its role front and center as we make sure that we are making those investments and upgrading the locks, the dams, the ports, the harbors, and the flood protection all across this country.

I would like to thank the original cosponsors of the bill, Ranking Member RAHALL for his efforts, Water Subcommittee Chairman GIBBS from Ohio, and the Water Subcommittee ranking member, Mr. BISHOP of New York. Thank you all for your hard work.

I would also like to thank my Senate counterparts, the chair of the conference for the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Senator BOXER, and Ranking Member DAVID VITTER.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report. This legislation is a reminder, and unfortunately a stark reminder, that when given a chance to work together in a bipartisan fashion, we can produce results for the American people.

I salute the chairman of our T&I Committee, Mr. SHUSTER from Pennsylvania, for his tireless efforts in this regard, and as well our subcommittee chairman, Mr. GIBBS, and our ranking member on the full committee, Mr. TIM BISHOP.

One of the first acts of our Federal Government was to improve navigation. On August 7, 1789, the first Congress federalized the lighthouses built by the Colonies and appropriated funds for their operation and maintenance.

□ 1275

Today, in the 113th Congress, we keep faith with that fundamental premise of government by advancing legislation that authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to improve navigation on our inland waterways and our ports. This is an effort which has languished